



THE ANNUNCIATION.

[Raphael Mengs.]



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## Prisoners.

For day's fatigues, arrested by the night,  
The manacles of sleep slipt on, and barred  
Into the prison house of dreams, in ward  
Till morn again unlock the doors of light.

For crimes of life, arrest, at last, by death,  
Fettered in dreamless immobility  
And sepulchred in darkness, till God's breath  
Extinguish time in His eternity.

MOTHER ST. JEROME.



## In the City.

(An Incident of the Rebellion.)

### I.

TWO green-clad figures, crawling furtively along the sidewalks, hiding in door-ways and behind projections, sheltering for long stretches while the streets were swept by a hail of bullets. At last a house was reached and entered stealthily. Here they rested.

"I will never leave this," said the elderly man, after a while. "My hours are numbered. Look."

He pointed to some bandages on his neck saturated with blood.

"Don't despair," said his comrade, even while he started at his pallor, and began to do what he could for him. But he perceived that what the elderly man had said was only too true. Already he had half bled to death.

Hastily the younger man began to undo the bandages. But the other motioned him away.

"It's of no use, comrade," he said. "Let me be. I have something to say."

Stiffly he raised himself up in the chair. Until a few days ago they had been strangers to one another.

"Maybe you are married and have little children dependent on you?" he asked.

But the young man shook his head, and there was silence for a while.

Then the elderly man spoke quietly.

"I have a daughter," he said; "my only child, and motherless. When I was leaving home on that morning, which seems so long ago, her last words were: 'Come back, day or night, father; I will be here to let you in.' Poor child, she did not realise what she promised. What could she know of the horrors to come. You know what has happened since. You have seen things that you never dreamed could happen even in pagandom. And now the cordon will be closing in."

He paused and looked with dying intentness into the other's face while he took breath. Then he continued:

"My little girl will wait till the last. Only the certainty that I am dead will make her leave the house."

He paused again before he said, significantly:

"The house is not so far from here, and the cordon is closing in. Do you understand?"

Without waiting for an answer he went on:

"She must be gone from it before they reach it. She is young and ignorant of her danger. I am dying. I can do

nothing to help her, except to commend her to your protection. I give her into your keeping. You are a stranger, but we have fought side by side. You might be my son. Find her. I have described the situation of the house and given you our little password. Here is her photograph——"

But even as he was in the act of handing the little locket to his companion, he suddenly stopped speaking, choked by his own heart's blood.

### II.

For three hours now he had lain in the garden of the house indicated by the dying man, bruised, exhausted, awaiting darkness, amid a silence broken by the crack of rifles.

Now at length night had fallen, and he watched for some sign of life about the house. After some time a light appeared through a slit in the partly-closed shutters of a window on the second storey. He cautiously approached the house and examined it, trying to decide what would be best to do. He feared to knock lest he attract attention. A pipe, half covered by strong, creeping ivy, ran up the wall close to the window. He determined to climb it, and without further hesitation began to scramble up. It was a superhuman effort, for he was completely exhausted. On the window-sill he paused and listened. Inside he could hear a light step, and, being reassured, tapped softly.

For a while there was no reply. Then a girl's voice said timidly:

"Who is that? Is that you father?"

She put her ear close to the pane.

"No—a friend—Una bán," he answered. "Put out the light and open quickly, for God's sake!"

He felt his last ounce of strength ebbing away.

The light disappeared, and then softly the sash was let up.

He climbed through, and lay on the floor. He heard her moving about in the dark, putting the shutters across again. Then he heard a match being struck, and by the flickering light of a candle discerned the figure of a girl, who approached trembling to where he lay and held the candle close to him. Her face was white with suspense and doubt, but on seeing the uniform—

"You are wounded?" she said, anxiously.

"It is nothing," he answered. "But I am exhausted. I must have sleep and some food."

He struggled to his feet, but immediately fell into a chair. Without a word, she hurried to get the food and laid it before him. While he ate he hardly spoke, so heavily weighted were his eyes with sleep. When he was finished he looked at the girl.

"You must forgive me," he said. "But I have had nothing to eat for twelve hours, and I have carried my life in my hands all that time."



She nodded her head in sympathy and horror.

For the first time he noticed her closely. She was the replica of the photograph, grown a little older. Her plait of yellow-brown hair which hung over her shoulder in the little picture was now turned up about her head, but her eyes held the same expression of her youthful soul—a mixture of daring and timidity, of tenderness and innocence—her chin had the same resolute little curve.

"I thought it might be my father," she said. "He, too, is out there. He sent you perhaps?"

"Yes," he answered, somewhat abruptly. "But I must not waste time talking. I have work to do later on, and I must rest. You can help me. I am going to sleep for three hours, and I want you to—do sentry"—smiling—"while I do so. Keep a watch, and if you notice anything unusual, waken me. It is now nine o'clock, and we must be gone from here and be far away before daylight."

"We?" in a startled voice. "Who?"

He felt that to tell her the truth now would be, to say the least, inexpedient.

"I must be gone," he said evasively. "But now I am going asleep. You stay by the window till it is time to waken me."

Then, without further argument, he lay down on the sofa and covered himself with a rug, while the mystified girl sat down by the window.

### III.

He was awakened by her shaking him. The sound of her voice brought to him at once a proper sense of the situation.

"It is twelve o'clock," she said.

With an involuntary moan, as he burst the heavy bonds of sleep, he dragged himself into a sitting posture. Then, seeing a basin of water placed for his use he plunged his head in it. When he had finished drying his face and hands he looked round at the girl.

"Now you must rest and eat something," he said. "You must be worn out. In an hour we must set out—you and I—we must leave this house."

"But I cannot go!" she protested at once. "I must stay here to let my father in. He may come at any time. I would rather die than desert him."

For a little while he argued with her, pointing out the great danger of remaining, but then, finding that her resolution was not to be overcome, he recognised that he must let her know the truth. As gently as possible he told her what had happened and of the charge her father had imposed on him, showing her as proof the locket.

"And now you must be brave," he ended up. "He died doing his duty."

She had held up her hands as if to keep away the significance

of his words, while a faintness she could not control came over her. He steadied her with his arm.

"Be brave," he repeated. "He died a soldier's death. Be worthy of one who dared so much."

He smiled to encourage her.

But with a sob she sank down on the sofa.

"Poor, poor father," she said, in a low, strained voice. "Then I will never, never see you again."

"Don't lose heart," urged her companion. "Remember we must live to be, as I say, worthy of such as he. Courage!"

Then, not to intrude further on her grief, he left the room and she heard him groping down the stairs.

When he came back, after a long time, he found her sitting in the same place with dry eyes.

"Put on a coat or some warm garment," he said. "The night air will be chilly. We must go now."

She shivered.

"Must we, indeed, go?" she answered. Then, with hesitation: "This—this is my home. All I have in the world is here. My father was my only relative, and we had not many friends."

He looked at her thoughtfully, understanding all she wished to say.

"Nevertheless," he replied, "we must go. Look!"

He opened the door which communicated with the other room, letting in a flood of reflected light. Then cautiously they stole towards the window of the latter room and looked out over the city. It was a dark, moonless night. Everywhere fires were springing up, casting their lurid glow on the darkness of the sky, the demons of hell itself seeming to dance in the flames that flung their cruel vermilion tongues upwards into the heavens. Above the roar of the fires were heard now and again the crackling of rifles. In each of these dark, flame-crested pits they knew that generous hearts lay stilled, while living ones faced death undaunted.

With a shudder they turned away.

"I would willingly have spared you this sight," he said; "but now you see how useless it is to stay here. The wind is blowing in this direction, and before the house may be on fire let us go."

They returned to the other room, where, silently and with trembling hands, she put on her cloak and prepared to accompany him.

"Do not fear," he said, as he helped her. "As God in Heaven will be my judge, I will protect you with my life. Come."

Then, blowing out the candle, he took her by the hand and guided her down the stairs and out into the darkness.

EMILY DOWLING.



## Some By-Ways of Tree-Lore.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON, we remember, disliked beaten highways; recording his opinion that they "never led anywhere!" It was the by-ways and the side-tracks of seclusion and solitude that, both in literature and life, attracted his sweet *dilettante* spirit; for in them he found at once the suggestion of mystery and the leisure to meditate upon it. For much the same reason we have chosen, in this paper, to follow some less frequented paths of tree-lore. We are in quest of Mystery; of the hidden religious significance of some of the superstitious customs and strange beliefs which our forefathers associated with trees. And while we wander, to and fro; while we gather a fact, here and there, almost at random, and look at it, in the light of the idea with which we gather it, we shall scarcely find it necessary to point our moral too insistently. It may well be that the moral will emerge of itself, springing, as it were, out of ambush, at every corner of our by-ways.

The earliest human idea concerning trees is the idea of their in-dwelling life; their individuality and personal "soul." We can guess at the strength of this thought by the Eastern fable that the first man was made from an ash, and the first woman from an elm.

Trees were conceived of as so full of the principle of life as to have some of the principle of life to spare; as to furnish creative material for the Creator's hand!

In Northern mythology it is a mighty ash-tree which grows at the roots of the earth and nourishes it. Under this tree lies the magic horn—the last trumpet which, when it sounds, will wake the dead.

An Indian legend tells of a magic tree in the moon, and of the elixir of life manufactured under its branches.

All trees as trees were, in a measure, sacred, in the ancient world, as channels and emblems of Divine life; but certain trees came to be considered as sacred in a special way, as associated specially with the Unseen.

How did this idea of peculiar sacredness and dedication to heaven grow up? One of the simplest and most obvious ways would have been through the especial beauty or stateliness of some trees—their great stature or conspicuous position. We know how primitive imagination was moved by such things, and what religious awe was excited by certain natural objects, that barred, or directed, the path of a wandering tribe. Forests, thickets, tree-crowned hills and "lone thorns" came in for a share of this reverence, whereof one likes to think, for the moment, apart from the idolatry and superstition into which it so often degenerated. The Hebrew poet, even in the face of the "groves" of Baal, and the "Asherahs," or tree-trunk

idols, could yet boldly maintain that trees were of God's planting. And we, who have been led further than he on the road of God's Will, can see in this primitive seeking for God in trees a deeper meaning than could his, or any pre-Christian mind.

But waiving that for the present, we will continue our random gathering of facts.

Besides beauty and conspicuousness, there was, in primitive times, another less obvious reason for the sacred character of certain trees. One of the earliest signs of a tree's dedication to heaven was, in the eyes of the pious pagan, its failure to bear any fruit serviceable to man! In other words, its practical uselessness was its mystical badge of honour.

If it developed its own individual life with no apparent regard for the needs of the human community around it, or if its individual life was arrested and abolished by some catastrophe such as a tempest or a thunderbolt that left it leafless and branchless, like a mere beacon or gallows—then the dominant thought concerning it was the hidden use and value it must needs have for the Power that had created it.

"All I could never be,  
All men ignored in me  
That I was worth to God——"

Nor need we even think that this powerful intuition stopped short there; even at Browning's lovely expression of reliance on God's tolerance and understanding of His creature's inabilities. For it seems abundantly clear that the intuition of pious paganism reached to some mysterious exultation, some peculiar glory and honour, which depended on, not merely existed in spite of, uselessness and mutilation!

For fear of offending the in-dwelling Power, the sacred trees were not to be cut recklessly, or without propitiatory ceremonies. In ancient Rome the felling of a tree—even, seemingly, when not specially marked as a sacred one!—was preceded by sacrifice. Some modern lovers of trees may be inclined to feel that this pagan reverence for the Divine handiwork might very well be revived, in a Christianised form, in the present generation!

But we must look at our facts on both sides before finally judging them, and this scrupulous attitude had its disadvantages. From it arose the desire to insist definitely on the bad luck that would pursue people who put the sacred thing to secular use. And so we come to the unpleasant superstition, which can still be traced in the tree-lore of Protestant countries—the idea, namely that "sacred" and "unlucky" mean the same thing. This gloomy thought comes out well—or, rather, ill!—in the traditions that surround the hawthorn, which many English people (not, invariably, of the most uneducated classes!) will still tell you is "unlucky to bring into the house."



However explained, or left unexplained, this taboo is a direct survival of the worship of Thor—the Norse thunder-god to whom the hawthorn was dedicated, and from whom it came to be known as the lightning-tree.

The Thunderer very naturally inspired fear rather than love, even in his worshippers, and it took Christian converts a considerable time to outlive the idea of his presence and power, as, in some mysterious way, residing in the tree, and operating through it. Doubtless they were repeatedly told that Thor either had no existence at all, or was but a discomfited fiend who could obtain no jurisdiction over any of God's trees. But the instinctive horror of evil association is stronger often than our reason and conviction, and the penalty of having turned a gift of God to evil purposes may often be the inability to separate in thought the gift from our abuse of it!

The custom of burying suicides under a hawthorn tree to mark the heathenism of self-murder, though it might have been a salutary disciplinary measure, and an object-lesson suited to the times, certainly had the effect of perpetuating the tree's ill-repute. Later we find it associated with demon-given power. The magic broomsticks on which witches were said to ride, when they raised thunderstorms, were invariably made of hawthorn wood!

Indeed, it seems highly probable that the flowering of the hawthorn in May had something, at any rate in Teutonic countries, to do with the proverbial "bad luck" of that month—a luck that has been gloomily proof against the natural enchantments of the season, and has required a very powerful Christian spell to change! Milton, in his more buoyant youthful verse, may talk, indeed, of "the jolly hours" leading on "propitious May!" But, in prose and fact, Protestant folk-lore applied exactly the opposite adjective! May was a most *un*-propitious month in which to be born, or to be married, and, if Protestant tradition had had its will, the natural jollity of its hours would have been sternly repressed to this day.

Catholic tradition and phrase have, as we know, restored to "the month of Mary" its rightful honours. And as for the hawthorn itself, its traditional identification with the thorns that crowned the Redeemer's brow has proved an antidote to its heathen associations.

The sense of this identification is especially strong in the tree-lore of France, where a relic, reputed to be the true Holy Crown, is preserved in Notre Dame, Paris. Legend says that when Charlemagne was kneeling in adoration before this relic, and the Crown miraculously burst into bud and blossom, it was the scent of the hawthorn that filled the air. And in France the *aubépine* or hawthorn is called significantly "l'épine noble"—"the noble thorn."

Another exceedingly "unlucky" tree—by an irony, only second in beauty to the hawthorn!—was the elder, the supposed property of the Earth-Goddess, or "Elder-Mother."

Indeed, it was, in a literal sense, her "roof-tree," for she lived beneath it, and would be driven from home if it were cut down. More than that, it was forbidden to bind up elder-wood with faggots, or to make any furniture of it—especially a cradle, for the child who slept in it would infallibly come to harm. *Sacred*, indeed!—yet profoundly un-propitious! The freehold of a hard and jealous power that, like Virgil's priestess, could only cry: "Keep off! Keep off, ye profane ones!" Christian imagination could ill endure this misleading idea of the hallowed and the Divine; and it hastened to throw over the elder the protecting mantle of a gentler faith. Many trees, we know, have been traditionally identified with the tree used for the Cross, but the halo of that destiny clings, in Western Europe, with peculiar closeness, to the elder. Its medicinal virtues—the healing salve of its flowers, the cheering wine of its fruit—have thus cleared themselves of the gloomy suspicion of witchcraft, long attached to them in popular lore, as the dower of the dreaded Elder-Mother!

It is sometimes said that love of Nature, and close and careful observation of natural things, is a modern development, and that mediaeval men showed little or nothing of it. But, though we have certainly the advantage of our forefathers in superior knowledge of Nature and her ways, and though the savagery with which she has been treated by our civilisation, in the shape of railroads and building-estates, may well have begotten a remorseful affection for her, the spirit of mediaeval tree-lore—the spirit that moved Bartholomew Anglicus, the 13th century Franciscan friar, to write his Latin book "On the Properties of Things"—still remains, for our example.

The author of the book we have just named designed it, we are told, "to provide similes for the benefit of the village-preaching friar," and "to explain the allusions to natural objects in Scripture." He—with many of his contemporaries—seems to have looked upon trees and herbs as "heirlooms" in the family of God, as links, realised and real, between the man-worn, time-beaten world, and the world fresh from the Hand of God.

Take his ingenuous note on the aloe:—"It is found in the great river of Babylon, that joineth with a river of Paradise (Eden). Therefore many men trow that the foresaid tree groweth among the trees of Paradise."

Here speaks the unmistakable voice of enthusiastic interest in a bygone environment—which, in these days of "Intimate Memoirs" and "Secret Histories of Continental Courts," some of us seem to reserve for more secular and sophisticated matters!

The good friar would fain have his mental picture of Eden complete. He hankers after helpful details. When he preaches on the Fall of Man, he must feel that his hearers have their mental picture, too; feel that they could see before them the heavy-foliaged trees of the garden, through which



in the evening of that blighted day the Accuser's Voice moved like a breath. To see these was to realise so much else, for, though the trees of Paradise were fallen, like man himself, from their first freshness and beauty, they still lived and grew, and were substantially the same trees that Friar Bartholomew's flock saw around them, or heard travellers tell of.

As for the aloe, with its strange tardy flowering, and great lamp-like blossom, we must confess to a new speculative interest in it, as an inhabitant of Paradise, an interest which we owe to the good friar and his loving tree-lore!

In Paradise, surely, the aloe did not take so long to put forth its flowers! It must have been only when the Voice, so long beloved (now for the first time dreadful to hear!) pronounced the doom of those who had tended and delighted in its beauty, that it sought, out of sympathy, its own peculiar share in the curse—to bloom only as often as fallen man should find happiness: "once in a hundred years!"

We said that, in our wanderings up and down the by-ways of tree-lore, we should not need to point the moral of our quest. And is there, in truth, any need? Are not the facts that we have gathered at random sufficient evidence of the reality, the omnipresence, of the thing we sought?

We have been like the children in the allegory who, living in a beautiful but partly poisonous garden, held up over the flower of fruit they wished to pick the small crosses they carried in their hands, and watched to see on which the talismanic shadow that proved its harmlessness would fall.

We, too, have seen that Shadow fall on facts and fancies that we might have been disposed to pass over, or to treat in the spirit of "the superior person." For so much of popular superstition is either a distortion of truth, or a faint foreshadowing of it; and more especially would this be the case in superstitions about *trees*!

Perhaps it is to the good that the actual tree that bore the mystical "all-heal" fruit was never named in Holy Writ nor identified in tradition! So on all trees of wood and garden some shadow of the great destiny of One may rest, and the beauty or usefulness of all of them gain a certain sacredness—that, at the same time, shall have no ill-luck in it!—from the memory of One that, for our sakes, was stripped of all beauty and usefulness and of all likeness to a tree.

G. M. HORT.

## The Harvest Fields of Ballywatter.

MRS. M'Cabe passed from a narrow street to one still narrower, more airless and more dark. A crumpled letter in her hand bore the address which she was seeking, and passers, whom she questioned, pointed her out the way.

At last in a dirty alley she found the house she sought, and mounting broken stairs where there was little air and less light she knocked at a door and was bidden to enter a room which the first glance revealed to her as bare and dingy. The window looked out upon a blank wall, so the room was half in shadow, but the newcomer could make out a woman's figure by the hearth, a man seated by the table with his head bowed on his outstretched arms, and a small, straight, still form upon the bed.

Two children, pale and puny, looked up at the opening of the door, and the woman also raised her head.

"Mother!"

"Ellen, my poor child! I couldn't but come when we got your letter, and an excursion running to-day and all."

She looked across at the bed, and her eyes growing accustomed to the gloom, made out a tiny coffin standing near.

"They haven't taken him yet," the woman answered the look, although no question was asked. "They'll be here any minute, though," and going over she uncovered the little dead face, really scarcely whiter or more wan than those of the living children who followed their mother, clinging to her skirts.

The prosperous stranger—for their granny was a stranger to them—looked out of place in the poor room, her comfortable mantelet and black-feathered bonnet making her daughter's ragged garb seem more ragged still.

"They're both gone, my two lovely boys, Jack here, and little Pat a month ago," the woman spoke in a dull, toneless voice. She had shed too many tears to weep again, even though her mother's eyes were wet.

"What took them then?" Mrs. M'Cabe asked, though tears were choking her as she spoke.

"The doctor said they had no constitutions," Mrs. Veldon answered, as though repeating a lesson. "Then they had no air—though indeed we're better off since Paddy went, for up to that it was under the ground we were living, in the kitchen below—and they had no sunshine to nourish them when times were bad."

"But—but—" stammered Mrs. M'Cabe, "why ever didn't you tell us how things was with you? 'Twas seldom ever you wrote, indeed, but when you did there was nothing in it but praises of the city."

Mrs. Veldon looked across to where her husband still sat



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motionless by the table. He must have heard his mother-in-law come in, and heard her question too, but up to this he had made no sign of life. Now, suddenly sitting upright, he turned a haggard, fiercely accusing face upon her, and raising one hand he pointed to the little body on the bed.

"Yes," he said, as though the question she had put on entering the room had not been answered. "Yes, that's Jack, our eldest boy, an' he's dead. Pat's gone too, an' that was hard enough, but Jack—one has nature for the first, I believe, more than for any—and now Jack is gone too. You ask what took him? Well, I'll tell you that—the drink."

"Oh, Dan, I never let him touch a drop——"

"Hush, woman." He interrupted his wife, silencing her with a gesture. "The doctor said the boys had no constitutions, and why hadn't they? Because of the drink that's ruined the two of us. They said the children were dying on us because of the poor feeding they got. An' why did they get poor feeding? Because of the drink. He said they'd need air an' sunshine to make them healthy. Why are we in this d——d city at all, an' not out in the country that bred an' reared ourselves? Wasn't it the drink that lost us our home an' our land an' our living?"

Whilst her son-in-law was speaking Mrs. M'Cabe had time to gather her thoughts, and now, taking her daughter's part, she answered him resentfully:

"Speak for yourself, Daniel Veldon, if you please."

But with a flash of fury he turned on her again.

"An' if I'm to blame to-day," he cried, "who brought me to where I am? You, Mary Anne M'Cabe, you and your husband, you and your miserly ways and your cursed temptations."

"Me!" stammered the old woman, almost dumbfounded at such an unexpected accusal. "Me that brought you to this? What's this you're saying, man, at all?"

"I say," thundered her son-in-law, now thoroughly roused, "I say that this miserable room is my home to-day, that my children are dead—and well for them—that my farm is lost, and my life is ruined, because of the drink you tempted me with in the harvest fields of Ballywalter, given by way of good fellowship, but really to save yourselves giving higher wages to them that worked for you."

The M'Cabes were the owners of a nice farm of land in the parish of Ballywalter, out of which they made a fairly comfortable living. It was Mrs. M'Cabe's boast that no day in the year she had less than four cows milking, and never a Sunday passed that she did not drive on her own side-car to Mass. Had it not been that a good deal more money was spent on drink than they could afford to spare on mere pleasure the M'Cabes would have been really well off, and the two sons who were now working for their father

at home could have afforded to start homes of their own, yet Mrs. M'Cabe could listen to sermons and read books on temperance without it ever dawning upon her that what she heard or read applied to herself or her own family.

Now, for a moment, her son-in-law's passionate reproach touched her self-complacency, and for the first time a doubt crossed her mind as to whether she and hers had indeed had anything to say to the ruin of the man who had married their daughter, ruin that included the wreck of both their lives.

Some twelve years before, Daniel Veldon had bought a small farm near Ballywalter and had settled down comfortably and steadily on it. Mrs. M'Cabe remembered, now that Veldon spoke of it, how he had come, as the custom is, to help his neighbours with the harvest. Never before had it struck her that this so-called hospitality is not only a sign of meanness on the part of those who offer it—for, after all, drink is given in the harvest fields partly because it comes cheaper than paying even a fair increase on ordinary wages for harder work and longer hours, and partly because when one farmer gives it others find it hard to get men to come and work without it, and in many cases their wives begrudge the milk that might so easily be given in place of porter. Thinking only of themselves and their own interests, the owners of the corn fields never stop to consider that the boys who work for them have the pledge, and that if nothing but porter is provided to allay their thirst they are putting overwhelming temptation in the way of those who are still bound by the promise made by them at their Confirmation.

But it is not only the boys who are tempted, and now driven to desperation by his own sad plight and the loss of his two sons, Daniel Veldon told the straight truth, without hesitation or excuse, to his mother-in-law.

"When I went to Ballywalter I went firmly determined to keep from the drink that had brought sorrow and misery to my own home. I had the taste for it in me, inherited from my father, God help him. Yet I wasn't such a weak fool but that I could keep from the temptation it was to me, and besides I had the pledge to help me to keep from it. Then I went to work for you in the hay harvest—and you offered me drink. I refused, but what good was that. The heat had me wild with thirst, and when I asked Ellen here for a drink of buttermilk she brought me porter, aye and laughed me into taking what I was longing for, in spite of pledge and all. Still I knew that I was going into the devil's hands, and though I drunk it day by day in the hay-fields, I had it in my mind all through to take the pledge again, once I got to my own work at home.

"But with your hay saved and carried there were others asking me to help, and offering drink, and I took it. Then the corn began to ripen, an' I said I'd go to the priest when that was cut, but in your place and in others I took more drink. Then there was the threshing. It was Ellen again who brought me porter in the barn, an' by that time I'd have taken salt water from her hands if she'd asked me.



"I was with the winter comin' in that I took to goin' down to your place of an evening—didn't I always get the drink in it! Then came the Christmas. At Scraft we got married, you'll remember, Ellen an' me. Well, I did take the pledge again then, an' hard it was to keep it. Yet I did up to harvest time again. Well you know how I went on after. Drinking, drinking all I could get, till the hay an' the corn an' all was cut, drinking on for no reason except that I'd given in to the thirst for it, till I couldn't well stop myself. Would you like to hear of another year? Well, at Easter I took the pledge—an' at harvest I broke it. Maybe if I'd had a wife who'd have kept me from temptation, or if I'd gone away to some place where that devil's custom of drink at harvest is not practised, I might have saved myself, but I didn't, an' if Ellen took her share, well, hadn't you reared her up to need and look for it?"

Mrs. M'Cabe would have protested, but Veldon hadn't finished yet.

"You know how the farm had to go, an' how we came here to the city to live on the few shillings I could earn this way or that. I was a country man, born an' bred, with no trade or fashion of city work, an' when me an' Ellen had nothing to drink, well, needs must that we did without it, but for all that, the children had it in their blood from both of us, an' so they had no health an' little feeding, an' two of them is gone—and won't it be well for the two that's left when they go too—."

His head fell again and he was silent, and silent too were his wife and his mother-in-law—horrified at sight of the naked truth. Never had the M'Cabes connected Veldon's ruin with their own habit of drinking, or their custom of providing others with drink, but now, told in this way, the women could not fail to see the truth. There was nothing to say, and indeed no opportunity of further talk, for the men came in to carry out the little coffin, and before the three of them met again Mrs. M'Cabe had time for thought and deep regret.

Penitently, with feelings that in all her life she had never known before, she laid a plan before her son-in-law, and humbly waited for an answer from him. There was a cottage vacant at Ballywalter, and work enough for another pair of hands upon the farm.

For the sake of the children would Veldon come back to the country?

It was a hard thing to ask. Veldon had left the neighbourhood to hide his poverty and loss where he was not known, and could he bring himself to face the gossip of the place, if he went back as a labourer where he had once been his own master?

A few hours ago the answer would have been "No," a thousand times "No," but sitting there in the dim room beside the body of his first-born son, long, long thoughts had

come to him, deeper thoughts than ever he had known. He saw clearly that when death comes it matters nothing to a man if his life has been spent pleasantly, so long as it has been spent in a way that does not bar the entrance of Heaven to his soul. He saw that if he stayed on in the city he would lose the two children who yet remained, and that by remaining in the temptations of the streets he was imperilling the eternal happiness of his own soul and the soul of his wife. Yet would he be seeking safety in going back to the place whose customs were as dangerous to one who had in him the love of drink, as the temptations of the city streets?

With this question he met his mother-in-law's faltering entreaties to return to Ballywalter, and in that miserable, poverty-stricken home, with the dead body of her grandchild before her eyes, she saw for the first time how she and her husband had sinned in blindly following a custom that, had they only considered, they must have seen was cruelly unkind to those who worked for them, and very foolish for themselves and their children. It might cost a little more to give increased wages to their harvesters and to spare butter-milk for them to drink, but with her eyes newly opened, Mrs. M'Cabe thought shudderingly that money would bring little blessing when by saving it homes became as the one in which she now stood, and little lives were lost, even as her little grandsons had lost theirs.

"Daniel," she said at last, and her voice was firm and determined, "I promise you, in God's name, I'll never let another drop of drink be given, in the harvest fields of Ballywalter, and if M'Cabe sets his face against the custom, believe me there'll be many another who will stand with him to break it. But—" and here she brought persuasion to her aid—"But at first, maybe, he'll find it hard to get men to work for him without the drink. Won't you come and stand by him till we have the custom broke?"

Veldon looked at his wife, old before her time, driven by poverty and sorrow to take the drink she had got the taste for long ago at Ballywalter, yet like himself longing to free herself from the slavery that the drinking habit had become. He looked at his children who, in the city were doomed, as he had said, because of the drink, and lastly his eyes fell on the place where just now the dead body of his son had lain. Then, after a moment's pause and a final conflict in his heart—could he even after humiliating himself so much as to go back to Ballywalter—could he get free from the demon who was now his master?—he turned to his mother-in-law:

"God helps those who help themselves," he said, "and with His help I'll do it. Yes, Mrs. M'Cabe, if you will keep the promise you've made to-day, I'll take back my hard words, and thank you kindly, Ellen and I and the two girls; we'll go back to the country, and with the help of God we'll help ourselves to start a new life."

And so they did.

ALICE DEASE.



## An Idealist.

Confiding, though confounded; hoping on,  
Untaught by trial, unconvinced by proof,  
And ever-looking for the never-seen.

THE number of dogmatists who have divided mankind into two classes for the better—or worse—exemplification of their own pet theories is so astounding that there hardly seems any valid excuse for adding yet another to the list. So, instead, we will join the lesser multitude that announces the division of the human family into three types, and our trio of groups thus runs: firstly, the people who deal in facts, retail and wholesale; secondly, those who traffic in a mixture of fact and fancy; and thirdly, the folk who deal not, and neither do they traffic. Turn the deaf ear to anybody who tries to persuade you that hundreds of individuals exist who have no possible use for anything but airy fancies, for, believe me, that species could not survive one summer, much less a second winter. Those super-visionaries exist only in the imagination of lesser visionaries, and once in a while these latter fancy that their idealists extraordinary are but a fairly good reflection of themselves in their more detached hours of imagining. It does not take much convincing to assure most of us that the idealist who has a fairly firm grip on realities is a more than ordinarily sensible person, but the idealist who is that and nothing else has yet to be born. As well try to make cakes from yeast only as to make a live being subsist on his filmy fancies.

You need not agree whole-heartedly with Edgar Allan Poe when he writes:—

All that we see or seem  
Is but a dream within a dream.

But you will be well advised to pause before you ladle out that brimming measure of sarcasm which you were wont to pour on the unoffending heads of the beings who strike you as having more fancy than fact in their composition. The well-leavened loaf is more digestible than the sodden variety.

Of course his neighbours all poked fun at Manus Munnelly, and equally, of course, Manus did not care two straws whether they did or not. He lived on a Mayo hillside where he could see “the first ray of the sun an’ it to be lightin’ on Croagh Patrick, an’ the last when he would be sayin’ good-bye for the night to Nephin.” Nurturers of dreamers are some of these Connaught hills, but of dreamers who face realities with as much sensibility as do many of the more prosaic people of the

plains. What if the neighbours all dubbed Manus a visionary and nothing else; what if they thought that his head was just a little too full of the old stories of the past? As one of them put his views: “There’s no harm in poor Manus for anyone, for himself laste of all. But it’s the quare notions do come out of him at times, wild sort of talk with not a power of sense in it, an’ he always expectin’ that great things was goin’ to happen shortly. An’ when they didn’t happen to-morrow or the day after, he would still be in great hopes that they’d come right the day after that. . . . There’s some round this place do be terrible troubled when they think of how full his head is of all kinds of high-falutin’ things, but what I say to them is, ‘Time enough to be troubled that way when his notions keeps them from their night’s rest.’ An’ it’s the grand things he sees when he sits an’ closes his two eyes—castles an’ queens, an’ grand floatin’ clouds with battles bein’ fought in them. An’ the quarest thing of all is the light way he takes his troubles. I’d nearly bet me buttons that if his left hand was cut off he’d say that it’s thankful he should be that it wasn’t the right.”

Two things chiefly distinguished Manus Munnelly from his neighbours. He had the gaze of one who sees things afar off more distinctly than he discerns the mundane objects in his immediate vicinity. Who could tell what visions his fancy conjured up for him in that wreath of mist which clings about church-capped Croagh Patrick, or in the haze which throws fairy bridges from island to island in Clew Bay? Secondly, he smoked his pipe differently. While the others “pulled hard”—smoking as if the disposal of a pipe was a business to be got through as determinedly as possible—Manus puffed with the long and leisurely “draws” of one finding a subtle solace and inspiration in the smoke-wreaths consequent on the emptying of his blackened and ancient pipe-bowl. And not till his clay was about half-empty did he talk.

“There’s people in this parish an’ on this very townland that you’ll see always goin’ around with the little harm that’s come to them drownin’ all the good they have. If they had the finest field of hay in the county they’d only be concerned about the thorn they got in their finger savin’ it. They can’t see the good days that’s comin’ to them, an’ they can only remember the bad days that’s past. When they’re countin’ back to some time gone by they’ll reckon it be the year or the day that somebody died, or be the month of a big storm—never be a christenin’ or a fine, dry summer. They’re always thinkin’ of what misfortune come in the past, an’ they seem never to think that anything but trouble is like to happen them in the days before them. There was a year near a score gone that a cow of me own fell into a boghole in the little bit of grazin’ land I have down in Lisheenfarnagh at the foot of the hill there, an’ the neighbours was all sayin’ that it was a visitation on me, that the boghole was haunted, an’ a dozen things besides. Well, I told them that it was better her to



fall in than one of ourselves, an' that with God's help I'd have another cow in her place for the summer after. I had, too, though I could never remember that I missed the price of her, an' me a man with no money to go waste, but what do you think, didn't a little calfeen fall into the identical same bog-hole before the year's end. There was the hullabillloo in the townland! One would come to me an' advise me to give up the field altogether when 'twas so unlucky with me, an' another would come an' say that he often heard of a boghole that had no bottom to it, an' that maybe it was one like that, an' for me to give it a wide miss for the future, an' then agin someone else would whisper to me that cattle seemed to be goin' agin me an' that if I took the advice of a friend I'd give them up altogether an' turn to sheep an' pigs. Well, I listens to them all, an' the first minit I could get a word in edgeways, I said that I was a power more foolish than any of them. 'How do you figure that out, Manus?' say they. So I ups an' says to them that if I only had the gumption of a three-year-old I'd have put a few palin'-sticks and a dozen yards of barbed wire round that same bog-hole, an' then the cattle would keep away from it. I fixed up the wire as soon as I could get it, an' not a baste has come to harm in that same field from that year to this. A dale of people ascribe the results of their own laziness to the effects of active bad spirits, an' spend a lot more time in explainin' to others how an' why an accident happened them than they would in doin' a little of the obvious thing that might prevent it. It's a grand thing that the more a man does in this world the less time he has to spend in explainin' how he did it, for it's chiefly the failures that have the glib tongue in explainin' how they came to grief."

The philosopher who pleaded, "Though life be rough, sing smoothly, O bard," would not have appealed in vain to Manus Munnelly. For, though Manus was not a poet he could sing in the measures which appeal to the mind which is not tied down by mere limitations of expressions. One can sing more fluently in prose than many versifiers have sung in rhyme—the only difference being that the song is not so stereotyped, though it generally has a good deal more of genuine feeling. And with all his idealism Manus was a realist of the resigned type.

"What I often say to the neighbours is this: Take what comes to you an' hope for better. For there's a good day comin' for all of us. It may be in this world or it mayn't, but all the same it's comin', an' the whole thing is to wait as quiet as you can for it. They way some people would wish things to happen reminds me of a man that would despair of ever seein' summer agin when he'd see the first November storm doin' its work of damage over the country. He'd wave his hands an' say that the country was in desolation for ever, forgettin' that half the enjoyment of a fine saison comes from the waitin' for it through months of rain and wind.

"There's a power of people, too, will be as down in the mouth as can be when a thing that they expect to happen

doesn't come off. They give up in despair, while I say to them that they should be cheerfuller than ever, for if an event doesn't turn up to-day isn't that all the more raison for there bein' a dale of a better chance of its turnin' up to-morrow? If you can only expect bad an' remember trouble just live in the day that's in it, but if you can recollect the bright things an' look forward to even brighter ones, 'twill do you no harm to live a little in yesterday as well as in to-morrow. For the world has too many people that can only exist in the hour that's just passed.

"I often say to meself: 'You're not a dale to look at now, Manus Munnelly, but who knows maybe you'd be as good as the best of them before long. An' no matter anyway what you look on the outside, if you feel sound inside, what do you care for any man?' I feel sure that not one of the swindler lads that makes thousands out of trickery an' duplicity can enjoy writin' out cheques to appease their foolish bills half as much as I do an' I scroogin' fourpence out of me pocket to pay in the shop at the cross for me ounce of tobacco. I don't like payin' out the money, but I do enjoy lookin' forward to all the fine smokin' I'm goin' to have out of that ounce, an' sure them boyos that writes out their cheques is generally payin' for what they had months ago an' they maybe heart sorry that they ever had it at all! As the sayin' has it, the smell of the cookin' is better nor the eatin' of it.

"There's many the man in this parish laughs enough to do him for a month of Sundays at some of the things I say to him, an' goes off thinkin' he's terrible wise an' knowin' besides meself. But let him, for as there's two roads by which you can get into most towns, so there's at laste two roads to lade a man to the end of his days. There's generally one of them lades under trees that is as dark as pitch after evenin', but as for meself I like to have the moon so long as it's to be had without a dale of lookin' for—but it's wonderful how many people like to struggle along under the darkness of an arch of trees. . . . .

"One time at the sports back at Rathcreeva I saw a lad that was practisin' for the high jump. They had two uprights with inch notches in them an' a bar across between. Well, he was jumpin' nice an' conny, shiftin' the bar up inch be inch, till one time he struck it with his toe an' he jumpin' across. What does he do but sets his teeth, comes back an' lifts it two inches higher. Then he goes at it with a sweep, an' shuroo! across with him clane an' clear. It was as much as to say that if an extra inch baulked him two more on top of it would be just the thing to make him do his best. . . . .

"An' another thing I'd say is this: People will tell you that I have big notions, but what you should ask them is, do they make me any smaller? Big notions does no harm except to men that can't carry them. As I told a man that was tacklin' me at a fair one day—better have big notions in a small head than have the case reversed. It's a terrible slap



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to a man to be told that he cannot see further than his nose, but isn't it worse if he can't think any further than it either? . . . Aye, an' another thing, is that thinkin' of the fine, bright days that's in front of us takes away some of the clouds from the ones we're livin' through. For no worse thing can happen a man than he to be not able to bring his mind a few steps higher nor the job he's turnin' his hand to for the time. I'd sooner be workin' an' thinkin' together than be walkin' round idle. An' it makes the work lighter."

But I may whisper that I had a hazy idea that Manus would prefer smoking and thinking to any other combination.

THOMAS KELLY.

## The Sorrows of Success.

*"Man never is, but always to be blest."*

HOW well Wordsworth summed all the problems up in that phrase—the sign-manual of the optimist, provided that you can read it aright. For, truly, the only rule of the road in our little highway is this—that you will never "get there"; or having "got there" that you will straightway wonder what urged you to impale yourself on such prosperity. And, indeed, if you are humble enough to ask yourself that question and to insist upon the answer, ultimately, I think, you will have a chance of heaven. At least that is my lay solution of the journey thereto. But to prove my abstractions by instances, here is that Plutonian Rockefeller. All the ciphers in the arithmetic book would not count his gains—and, behold, for all that, who follow him! Surgeon and apothecary wherever he may go so that death in rehearsal was always in the wings as he walks on to the masquerade of living. Five thousand dollars a year, they say, the young man had for carrying a bag of chloroform, lint, strychnine "revivers," and the battery of knives. For my lord Goldpocket had but a very dried parchment of an old stomach behind, and, any instant, an ulcer might perforate and peritonitis finish bullion in a few hours, or minutes even if the shock were very severe. So, when next you are green-eyed and yellow-eared with envy of that local bigwig who can still buy whole pine-apples, look back on my Rockefeller and his mystical "waits of death" for ever following after. We poor men for the most part die simply in our beds with no great pageant thereat—which again is the full and holy Christian way to die. Or accost Petrarch there, that Italian polishing and polishing ever his Latin

poems that were, he longed, to make him immortal and that now are little read though his sonnets which he regarded and lightly wrote as ephemeral displays of the feeling of the hour, keep him permanent in literature as a world figure. And that great Fleet street galleon with all his laden learning! See him tied up there for eternity, he fondly trusts, in his mighty "Dictionary," now given over everywhere to the ship-breakers of plagiarism while the colossal tea-drinker himself aboard Skipper Boswell's boat is the most famous sailor ever "pressed" for the voyage of fame by any biographer. And changing round to another "heavy" in the human drama, behold the learned Doctor Mahaffy making elephantine blunders in his old age about the utility of bare-feet in polar regions, and ambitioning at the end a fearful parochial fame on a township executive after he has "drunk delight" of intercourse with Kaisers and Kings in his crowded earlier days. And by a fearful transit, here is Nero now who burned cities and made torches of human limbs for his circus games. Behold himself a competitor at the great games and winning a "faked" wrestling match so that the arena should applaud him, going away wrapt in orgiastic delight at his greatest triumph. And consider Chesterfield bursting for glory as orator, statesman, and patron of learning in his day. Consider too his pride that he (above all) is the first viceroy to venture on "justice to Ireland." And by what does he live? Why, his "letters to his son," the human touch and the keen common-sense there is a genuinely interesting combination. And that other statesman, Sir Edward Grey, threatening already to live as patron of fishermen after all his "delinquencies" and "ineptitudes" of state have been exposed by his opponents. Or Synge, that Irish Saturn, dreaming of glory along the Boul' Mich' at Paris and finding his star at last in Achill far out from the Quartier Latin. Poor Synge, a mind all of crusted jewellery, but over it the long shadows of malaise and disease! And Sir Frederick Treves, again, who might command fee, fame, and fortune wherever he went, turning away altogether to his yacht while still a comparatively young man, longing to write books of travel and mild adventure rather than to hold the lives of Princes and Potentates any more at the end of his forceps.

And that other doctor—oh such a physician, doing his rounds in Southwark below the Thames in his second-hand suit of velvet and gold, prescribing pills and ointments and visioning hemispheres the while. But Goldsmith had a sense of humour, surely, when he told his friends that he had retired from practice because a lady had cast aspersions on his skill by throwing his bottle of mixture out of the window! What sublime nursery-stuff is this of Goldsmith feeling pulse and sounding chests while, all the time his own heart was in Verona, or even in a cul de sac of Fleet Street,



where he would play the piccolo o' nights for dancing children.

And of moderns, there is the wonderful Churchill who "In the course of one revolving moon was chymist, fiddler, statesman and—" we must not call him buffoon, for that term is no longer used in its high philosophic sense of St. Francis' time. And Churchill is not to be too hastily condemned in a world where all is error. Though, happily-miserable man, he will never achieve the decision of just what he means to be, and so

"An old age serene and bright,  
And lovely as a Lapland night,"

may be his reward when he fades out purged, by failure, of all his ambitions.

And on politicians few homilies could be more striking than the mere life story of Frank Hugh O'Donnell, one of the misfits of fate, who with great intellect and insufficient restraint tumbled down painfully out of the seats of the mighty, until, at the end, his audience was mostly the Cogers' Saturday night debate in Fleet Street where, muffled in his great mackintosh and under his big hat, he started up now and again like a figure from the heath in "Macbeth" and, uttering prophecies and omens, disappeared back into his shrouding mist again.

It was tragedy, at best and at worst, this man who had wrestled with the great Parnell himself and who had been often a figure of note in the capitals of Europe, now debating it with the Saturday nighters of the free and easy Cogers' Hall! And O'Connell even who left us his name in street and bridge, what a terrible time he has himself, out of favour and fearful towards the end. At Lyons, it is on that last terrible panting to Rome, he can proceed no further. Uneasy, his faithful friends cannot keep him in bed even during the night. And so he dies, far from all he fought for, Rome his ecstasy far, far too!

It is a strange and a startling chronicle, this history of each man's ambitionings. Strange because we will rarely apply its moral in advance to our own, startling enough to send us up the Sierras with the Spanish hermits if we do, the lesson of all of it that only in this is the real happiness:—

"The waiting for the turning of the tide,  
The lack crown labour, and the long suspense."

D. L. KELLEHER.

## In the Forest of Marly.

By an IRISH DOCTOR.

MARIE and I left Paris in the early morning and, seeking the unfrequented ways, wandered into the depths of the forest of Marly. The air was full of the music of the birds and the drowsy hum of the insect world, and the summer sun was flooding the leafy dales in golden glow, making a scene of fairy-like loveliness; but for me all the beauty of earth was concentrated in the angel form by my side, and her simplest word or look, the faintest rustle of her robe, or the lightest touch of her hand, was of far greater import than the politics of nations or the cataclysms of worlds.

As we entered a little dale the attention of my fair companion was arrested by some irregular masses of stonework peeping through a luxuriance of ivy. She soon recognised that they were the foundations of a little cottage which had evidently gone to ruin many years before, and would have given no further thought to her discovery if I had not assured her that she had come by chance on the most interesting place in the forest for those who, like herself, were interested in the by-ways of history. Her curiosity being aroused, she seated herself on a mossy stone and prepared to listen, and as I lay at her feet we wandered in spirit in the forest of olden days, and for a brief space shared the lives of those who had once made the echoes of the woods resound to their joyous voices, but who long ago had mouldered into dust in the silence and solitude of the tomb.

If you had been here on the fifth of January, 1764, you would have seen the smiling cottage of the chief forester where now these stones encumber the ground. He was skilful at his work and much in favour with the superintendent, and lived here very happily with his wife, Mother Victoire, as she was called, only one thing wanting to make their home a heaven on earth—a little child. But Mother Victoire made up for the loss of her heart's desire by caressing every little one she knew, and giving them dainties made by her own skilful hands.

One day as she drew forth from her store a well-adorned cake she heard a soft footfall at the doorway, and turning her head saw a richly-dressed boy of ten regarding her with great interest. As she had always lived among the poor, the noble costume of the child and his air of decision at first intimidated her.

"Who are you who live in this little house?" he inquired, regarding her on every side.

"Sir, I am your servant, Mother Victoire, wife of Isidore, the king's forester," replied the good woman, recovering her



self-possession. "But, enter, sir, and rest a while. And perhaps you are hungry. What think you of this cake which I have just made?"

"Your cake smells very nice," said the boy, surveying it curiously. "I have never seen anything like it before."

"Then eat some, and you will do me great honour," was Mother Victoire's instant invitation.

The youngster made no delay, but delicately accepting the piece offered to him ate it with an excellent appetite.

"It is very good: it is delicious!" he declared. "What a pity my brothers cannot taste it!"

"Bring your brothers," replied joyously the good dame; "and I will make you even a better one."

"Then we will come to-morrow morning, for during the day we must return to Versailles to celebrate the Feast of Kings."

"To Versailles!" exclaimed Victoire. "Perhaps you are a son of one of the lords who at this moment accompany our King Louis XV to the Hermitage of Marly?"

The child slightly hesitated, then replied:

"You have guessed aright; but on no account tell anyone of to-day's escapade or our projected one. I have escaped from the study hall, where my tutor thinks I am still. How delightful it is to be free! I have found out some lovely paths, much better than those my brothers know. What a jolly party we will make to-morrow! Alas! it is time to return. Rely on us, my good woman, and I thank you very, very much!"

Victoire, perfectly delighted, followed with her eyes the lad as he disappeared in the direction of the castle.

"I know well how to amuse these little lords," she murmured to herself, "and I want them to remember the wife of the forester of Marly."

The day following was a little cold, but with abundance of sunshine, and when Isidore had set out on his rounds his wife deftly prepared a magnificent cake, into which she slipped a large bean. The guests kept their appointment to the minute. The little visitor of the day before was accompanied by a somewhat older boy, and two others apparently nine and seven.

"Oh! the darlings!" cried Victoire, approaching the two youngest. "Come and sit down, my children, here by the side of the brazier, for it is not very warm to-day. We are going to draw for kings, and afterwards I will tell you a lovely tale if it won't bother your eldest brother."

"By all means," cried the four children, joyously, as they clustered around the good woman. Then the cake was cut and passed from one to another.

"I'm the King!" suddenly exclaimed the second child, who in the first mouthful of cake had found something resisting.

"Ah!" he added regretfully, "I haven't the whole bean."

"My cake has another piece of it," said the third brother also. "Louis, you will share royalty with me."

"I'm a King as well," interrupted the youngest. "See, my piece of bean is as big as yours."

The bean, placed in the middle of the cake, had been cut into three parts.

"I am the only one not called to honours," gaily remarked the eldest. "Brothers, I concede this ephemeral royalty to you. Let us drink to the health of our three Kings!"

And the goblets were filled with limpid water from the spring, the only beverage Mother Victoire ever knew. Then the good lady, according to her promise, began to relate the extraordinary adventures of a good king protected by fairies; but she interspersed her history with questions that vastly entertained the children.

"And then, my children, this very powerful king, as powerful as Louis XV—— Do you know Louis XV?"

"A little," replied the eldest, laughing.

"One day he sent for his son," continued Victoire; "for he had a son like the Dauphin—— Have you seen the Dauphin?"

"Yes!" replied the children, wreathed in smiles.

"He has four pretty boys like you, I'm told," said Victoire, beginning to lose the thread of her story. "But it is impossible to get near these little princes. Oh! I would give anything to know them!"

The children broke out into peals of laughter.

"Continue your story, Mother Victoire."

And the rambling, fantastic tale was unrolled, to the great delight of the youthful audience. When it came to an end the elder brother gave the signal to depart, and turning to the good woman, addressed her thus:

"In thanks for your hospitality I will give you the means of seeing the four grandsons of Louis XV. At three o'clock be at the entrance of the route for Versailles: that is the time for the starting of the royal cortege, and they will be in the third carriage."

At three o'clock, as you may imagine, Mother Victoire was in the crowd before the castle gate. Suddenly the gates opened and the carriages appeared, but unhappily the good lady, being driven back by the horses of the escort, could not see the first two carriages, which passed with great rapidity. The third carriage advanced in its turn. Braving the hedge of guards, she pushed forward, until at the carriage door she recognised the four children whom she had entertained that morning in her cottage.

A golden crown-piece fell at her feet, and, agitated and trembling, she heard these words:

"Mother Victoire, receive this crown from him who hopes one day to be a king, despite the prediction of your bean."

Tears of joy and gratitude filled her eyes and she saw no more, and in whirling clouds of dust the royal cortege disappeared in the woodland.

Victoire never forgot those parting words, and guarded as a precious relic that piece of money, for did it not recall the hospitality extended to him whom she believed to be the future King of France!



If she had lived long enough she would have known that she had entertained not one king but three: the eldest of the children, he who believed himself the heir to the throne, and who was no other than the Duke of Burgundy, died in 1771, three years before his grandfather. The three other children, the Duke of Berry, the Count of Provence, and the Count of Artois, reigned successively under the names of Louis XVI, Louis XVIII, and Charles X.

Those whom the gods love die young. Better for the others had they met the fate of the eldest, and left this world amid the genuine sorrow of the nation, than die as they did in after years in exile, revolt, and ruin.

Marie listened to me in silence, and remained pensive and grave as we left the ruins of the little cottage and continued our walk through the woodland. And I knew from the shadow on her face and the movement of her lips that her tender heart was touched at this memory of the dead, and that a fervent prayer was going up from the depths of her innocent soul for those who once, like us, had trod those winding paths, so full of hope and joy and love—the little princes of Marly.

## Eire, Mother of Beauty.

She has no peer in all earth's surging seas

For bevelled strands where lispings wavelets fall,

And gorse-gold hills and pine-loved peaks whose tall

Grey heads are crowned with cloudy canopies.

And there are woodlands wild with minstrelsies,

And deep-toned caves where lonely curlews call,

And dells of dream, and lanes made magical

With flowers that yield their lips to every breeze.

And when she lies asleep beneath the moon,

And ghostly shadows flit o'er field and fen,

The pilgrim hears a faint, unearthly tune,

As down the wind Finvarra and his men

Pass on swift steeds to some old haunted dún,

To dance and sing till morning comes again.

HUGH A. MACCARTAN.

## Coir na Teine.

Níor breairr ruid a d'empmír an mí seo coir na teine ná beagáinín  
cainnte do bheir aghann i dtuaisí pádrais. Appail  
**PÁDRAIS** na héineann agus pádrún na n-áeéal. Tá a  
**NAOMHTA.** lán ríealta mar gheall air agus ba coir go mbeoír  
i reilb agus i n-aigne sae éineannaig. An uair  
a d'empmír beagáinín ar pádrais, an uair a tiúbaíamíto  
urum láma dó, an uair rin beir beir linn go deo, ac an fáo  
ir a coimeadóramíto an áeéal beo beir cumne ar pádrais i  
n'éirinn agus spáir do i scioróir áeéal.

An fáo ir do bí pádrais ran eiróir, as foíum in na  
ríoileannaib díadacta, ní raib ruamnear ná  
**SLÓR NA** ríotcáin 'n-a éiríde ac as cumneam i scóiríde  
**n-áeéal.** ar éirinn agus ar a muinntir. Fé beir, do  
beiréad taibneam dó 'na dtuaisí. Sáoil fé sup  
cáinir fear éiríde ar éirinn agus sup tus an fear liciir dó, agus  
fé céad focal a bí in an liciir ná "Slór na n-áeéal." Agus  
nuair a léig pádrais an focal ran, fáoil fé sup éuala fé slór na  
n-áeéal a bío 'na scóiríde i n-áice coile foclaic, coir na  
rairíse riar, agus iad 'sa sláodac air—"Iarramíto oir, a óig-  
fir naomta, teacé eiríam cun coimníge 'nár meair." Agus  
éualo na focail rin tré éiríde pádrais ionur nár féad fé a tuille  
do léigead ac beir fé 'na d'beiréad agus d'beiréad leir féin go  
raíad fé go n'éirinn.

Do d'emp pádrais ruid ar an ángeal do cáinir éiríde an oiríde  
do. Éualo fé as tréall ar an bpápa cun céad  
**AN CÉAD** agus uiríam d'fáil an éiríde do muneam  
**SLÓL.** do muinntir na héineann. Tus an pápa céad agus  
beiréad do. D'óirígead pádrais 'na eiríde agus tus fé  
áiríde ar Oileán na héineann. Cáinir fé i dtí i sco. an dúin.  
Bí beiréad beir de coimníde 'na téanna agus nuair éiríde  
taoíreac an éiríde rin agus a áeéal iad, bíoair cun a n-óiríde,  
ac nuair féadair ar ghuir pádrais agus éirídeac é coim-  
níde, coim cáin, níor beiréad don tróir leir. Ní head, ac  
d'óirígead an taoíreac—Díco—do pádrais agus tus fé eiríde  
do teacé go dtí a tí féin. Do ruid pádrais ríor ann rin agus  
míair fé do Díco agus d'á muinntir an gno a tus go n'éirinn é.  
Láir fé leó 'na dtéanga féin go rímlíde agus go ríllíde agus  
éirídeac ran móil é, agus do beir fé iad go léir. Dob é seo  
an céad beir a táinir pádrais cun an tígeam i n'éirinn, an  
céad ríol do eiríde fé i scóiríde áeéal.



Seo ríseilín deap eile. Ar a ríse go Teannair do pádrais d'fán  
 ré oróce i dtíse tiseapna áiríste agus slac fear a'  
**beinín.** tíse agus a clann an cneideam uaird go fonnmar  
 agus go humal agus do bairtead iad san moill.  
 Bí buacail ós aca agus tús ré spáó a éiríde do'n naomh com lúac  
 agus d'péuc ré air. Níor féad ré fanamant uaird. Bí an naomh  
 tuirpeac agus tuit ré na coolaó. Tós an buacail dorn de  
 blácaib cúmpa agus leis ré go caom i n-áct pádrais iad. Do  
 dúirís pádrais agus do beannuis ré an buacail as tabairt  
 beinín .i. beannuisce, air agus 'sá páó supb é beinín a bead 'na  
 leand agus 'na oigre dó. Bí ácar mór ar beinín agus nuair a bí  
 pádrais as mteact ní fanfaó an leand 'na diard. Lean ré é  
 agus ius ré ar coir pádrais le n-a d'á lámh. Slaoó ré le 'na  
 ácar. "Ó leis dom dul i bfocháir pádrais. Is é m'ácar é!  
 Is é m'ácar é!" Do tusaó cead do mteact agus níor fás leand  
 pádrais a ácar coróce. Tá a lán rísealta deap eile mairtear  
 i dcaob an naomh uaird do tús eolar dúma ar dia ac níl ríse  
 asam a tuille aca do cup ríor annro.

\* \* \* \* \*

Tá curó maic móna bailigte asam ceana péim i gcomair na teme  
 agus táim an-buirdeac do na cáiruib do cup  
**FÓIRA.** cúsam é. Tá ríseilín deap ó mlaípe pleimeann  
 asam i gcomair na míora ro cúsam.

MUIRIS NA MÓNA.

"What business has a Russian for the rippling language of Italy or India? How could a Greek distort his organs and his soul to speak Dutch upon the sides of Hymetüs, or the beach of Salamis, or on the waste where once was Sparta? And is it befitting the fiery, delicate-organged Celt to abandon his beautiful tongue, docile and spirited as an Arab, 'sweet as music, strong as the wave'—is it befitting in him to abandon this wild liquid speech for the mongrel of a hundred breeds called English, which, powerful though it be, creaks and bangs about the Celt who tries to use it?"—DAVIS, *Essay on Our National Language*.



## A Literary Circle for Young Readers of "The Cross."

Conducted by FRANCIS.

### RULES OF THE GUILD.

- I. The Guild of Blessed Gabriel is a literary circle open to boys and girls under 18 years of age.
- II. The members will be expected to spread devotion to Blessed Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows, by practising the virtues of purity, charity and truth; and by living lives worthy of him who is to be their model and guide.
- III. They will at all times observe the conditions under which the competitions will be held.
- IV. They will endeavour to bring as many new members as they can into the Guild of Blessed Gabriel

ST. PATRICK'S month has come to us again after a wild and weary winter, and in one of the most fateful years our dear land has ever known. And during this month, from the first day of it to the last, and as often every day as possible, I want every member of the Guild, big and little, new and old, to pray fervently to the great Apostle of the Gael, who loves Ireland so truly and fondly, begging his help for her that she may come safely through this trying time, that the dreams of her long line of martyrs may be realised, that the "little black Rose may be red at last," and that her faithful children may know what it is to sit in the sunshine of freedom. Great is the power of St. Patrick in Heaven; great is the power of children on earth. See to it that two such strong and irresistible forces are joined together during this holy month of March for the glory of God and the honour of Ireland. The heart of our Mother is stirring to-day with a wonderful exalting hope. Pray fervently, my children, that her hope and her dream, frustrated and broken so many times in the past, may reach fruition in the near and fateful future. Prayer has been Ireland's sword in many a black hour. It hasn't grown rusty yet.

Never in the history of the Guild has my heart been gladder than to-day; never have the letters of my dear young friends given me more unalloyed pleasure. I have heard tidings from two members—one in Ireland and one

#### My Post Bag.

in England—that has filled my heart with praise and gratitude to God for the thought which first set on foot this Guild of Blessed Gabriel. I cannot disclose the tidings, but I will ask all the members to join with me in praying for the special intention of two dear comrades of ours. Apart from this glorious news, I have got scores of letters, one exceeding the other in measure of gladness and happiness it contained for poor old Francis. And first on my list of acknowledgments I shall place this prose poem from the pen of Lillian Nally:—  
 "In Ireland it is the seed-time, and in the Guild it is the seed-time, too, and Blessed Gabriel is watching, while Francis and his little guilders plant the plots for God within their hearts. This spring-time 'tis with heavenly seeds they sow—the violet of humility, the rose of charity, the primrose of



simplicity, the lily of purity, and the shamrock of patriotism. Under the sunshine of God's love may they bloom and blossom, bringing joy and brightness to our sad world here and glory and gladness to God in His world above." "Amen" will be the prayer of all to this sweet prayer of a true heart, and it will cause us to pray the more constantly during Patrick's month for the land of his love. From over the seas a message sweet as the songs of birds comes to me from **Mary Rennie**, and Mary's heart is full of thanks for the "Story of Ireland" which she received as a prize last month. She has been out on a recruiting campaign again, and has succeeded in enlisting five more recruits in Blessed Gabriel's Army. They are **Dorothy Nelson, Louie Kenyon, Kathleen Nelson, Elizabeth Dorning** and **Madge Occleshaw**, and they will all write to me when a religious exam. for which they are studying is over. Need I say they are welcome as well for their own as for the recruiting officer's sake? There are two letters from **Rita Carlos**, and I wish I could print every word of them in full. Rita holds in her heart a great love for Mathair Eire, and it breathes in every word she writes. The prize book she received some time ago, "In Dark and Evil Days," by Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, was just the one she desired. And then she goes on to tell a bit of news that is sad and joyous:—"I don't think I told you before, Francis, that my dear little brother Charlie, who died at the holy Christmas time last December, intended to join hands with you under the mantle of Blessed Gabriel, if I won a prize, but alas! when January's number containing my prize essay appeared, he was sleeping his last long sleep. May God have mercy on his young soul! He is happier to-day, I am sure, than any of us who are left behind. He was only twelve years old, and it was hard to see him die, but we must realise at such times the truth of Clarence Mangan's words:—

"All things go their destined way  
As He decrees."

It was indeed hard to lose him, Rita, but I am sure he is nearer now to Blessed Gabriel than any of us, and he will do far more for the Guild than he could ever have done had God given him a longer life. One of the most welcome members I have ever received into the Guild is **Kathy Corkill**, who, although she is now, and has been for fourteen months, an inmate of a sanatorium for consumptives, does not utter in her letter a single word of complaint, but is filled with joy and gratitude for having come in contact with **The Cross** and the Guild. If some of us only get a cold or a twinge of rheumatism or any little turn at all, we growl and complain until our hearers are disgusted, and here is a child who has been more than a year in hospital, and her letter is as joyous as if she were racing about in the sunshine every day. She actually wants to know where the coupon is (at the top of back cover, Kathy), so that she may compete! Won't all the members pray for her recovery, and won't some of them write her a letter now and then? Her address is Ward XI., Park Hill Sanatorium, Southhill Road, Dingle, Liverpool. **Michael J. Kennedy** has been silent a long time, but his letter and poem make up for all. Both filled me with delight, and I trust the Editor will be able to find space for the verses in **The Cross**. What a fund of talent the Guild has discovered, and what fires of zeal and piety and love it has lighted everywhere. The bundle of letters and essays which came to me from the **Presentation Convent, Drogheda**, was so big that the postage on it was 4d.! And every single letter was a treat, especially when it told of the "Chinaman from Cork," who paid a visit recently to the city on the Boyne. The writers of personal notes were **Ellie Clarke** (returning thanks for her prize), **Sara Halpin, Mary F. McLeer, Maggie Bowden, J. McQuillan** (James or John?), **Emily McQuillan, Maggie Mathews, Anna M. Carton, Nancy Dolan, Nora Corry, Nancy Boylan, Kitty Boylan** and **May Carroll**. The lecture given by the "Chinese Corkman" proved to the girls that the things they had read in their Geography Reader about the "dirty Chinese" were far from being true. They must remember the description by the same truth-tellers who have represented us as the "dirty and drunken Irish" in every land on earth. All, of course, in the interests of civilisation and Christianity. A 'dtuigeann sibh, chailini? Just after the Drogheda post bag had been disposed of up came a letter of apology from my good friends in Carrick-on-Shannon explaining that owing to the visit of a terrible personage called Head Inspector they have been unable to write for some time—almost paralysed in fact. I hope they came out of the encounter as buoyant as ever, and that we will soon hear from them again. Next comes **Maire Nic Artuir** (Mona Carter) of Galway City, who writes a very nice letter requesting admission to the Guild, and even if a man were after an interview with a Frongoch dinner and felt in bad humour, he couldn't say nay to such a coaxing request. Maire hopes to bring us many recruits from the City of the Tribes. Go n-eirighe lei! After Galway

comes its true-hearted neighbour, Clare, represented by **Mary Darcy, Mary Ward, Eva Cooke, Mary Hogan, Hannie Ward, Bridget Lynch, Lucia Butler, Katie Moloney, Mary Bugler, Josie Byrne** and **Mary O'Brien**, all pupils of the Convent of Mercy, Killaloe, and all eager to be members of the Guild. A hearty welcome to them and to all others from the O'Curry country who knock at the door of the Guild. Can they tell us anything about the great Irish College that is down there on the banks of the Shannon? **Hilda Ashcroft**, in the course of a most interesting letter, tells of the hard weather they have had "somewhere in Lancashire," England. "It would make you laugh (I suppose you are an ordinary being—I am, Hilda, very ordinary) to see people almost fighting to secure the attendance of the one and only local plumber to repair leakages to water pipes, etc. Skating races on the dams in the moonlight are really picturesque, and quite wonderful for this dull place, though they might not appeal to you who can revel in the very lap of nature in all her beauty. Of course, spring will soon be here, which was heralded so prettily in the prose poem in last month's Guild." Hilda says she has quite a collection of **The Cross** frontispieces, and considers the Editor has exquisite taste. I forgot to mention further up that Rita Carlos had brought two new members into the Guild—her brother **Noel** and her sister **Nina**; and she means to secure three more recruits so as to qualify for a badge. She has also, she tells me, forwarded a contribution in Irish to Muiris na Mona, whose page she reads with great interest every month. I trust other members will follow her example in this respect, and raise even higher the name and fame of the Guild. **Eibhlín Ní Riain** is overjoyed ("dancing with delight," she says) because she has heard from a friend in Dublin that "Irish Fun" is to resume publication again in April. "It used to be a very welcome visitor to our house every month," writes Eibhlín "and its clean, bubbling Irish humour set us all laughing for hours." Will Eibhlín be surprised to learn that even staid old Francis was a constant reader of "Irish Fun," and is delighted to hear from her that its wit and humour are about to flash over the land again? But I suppose she wouldn't wonder now if she were to hear that Francis dances jigs and reels, or smokes a pipe, or kicks football, or takes sugar in his tea. Thanks to **Eibhlín Seoighe** for her little note. I greatly fear the wish expressed in it will hardly be realised for some time at least owing to unavoidable circumstances. But it surely will, some time. Two new members are **Martha Murphy** (Cork) and **Thomas J. McCloskey** (Emyvale, Co. Monaghan) to whom I extend a warm welcome. Very nice letters have come from **Kathleen Savage** (Armagh), **May Glynn** (Sutton, England), **Lizzie Malone** (Howth), **Maureen O'Neill** (Armagh), **Kathleen Flanagan** (Dublin), and **Margaret P. Keogh** (do.). Many thanks to them, one and all! Will **Angela Murphy** please send the ages and addresses of her recruits?

The Badge, bearing the portrait of Blessed Gabriel, which is awarded to the member who brings five new recruits into the Guild, goes this month to **Mary Darcy**, Convent School, Killaloe, Co. Clare, and to **Mary Rennie**, 231 Robin's Lane, Sutton Oak, St. Helen's, Lancashire, England.

#### Badge Winners.

(1) All newcomers will please write a personal note to **Francis** apart from their competition papers, asking to be admitted to membership of the Guild. (2) Always put your name and address on your competition paper, whether you send a letter or not.

#### Important.

There was a magnificent entry again this month, though in the senior competition I fear the standard reached was not as high as it should have been. The prize for the best essay on "The Shamrock and the Cross" is

#### The Awards.

awarded to **Mary Ward**, Convent School, Killaloe, Co. Clare. Very good work was done by Rita Carlos, Hilda Ashcroft, Eibhlís Seoighe, Lucia Butler, Margaret P. Keogh, Brigid McCloskey, Mona Carter, Monica Kierans, Frances C. Sheridan, May Carroll, Nellie Dempsey, Sara Halpin, Lucy Leonard, Annie O'Farrell, May Collins, Mary Frances McLeer, Maggie Bowden, Rita McAllister, Maureen Dwyer, Josie McQuillan, Eileen Halpin, Maggie Mathews, Anna M. Carton, Nancy Dolan, Nora Corry, Kitty Boylan, Will Moran, Joseph Heagney and Brian Carroll.

Here again a big entry and excellent work. The prize for the best letter on "Why I Love the Shamrock" goes to **Kathleen Savage**, 6 College St., Armagh. I have great pleasure in making special mention of Hannie Ward,

Babs Lynch, Eva Cooke, Martha Murphy, Angela Murphy, Maureen O'Neill, Noel Carlos, Marie A. Dunne, Lily Fox, Philomena Johnston, Kitty Mathews, Josie McGrath, Maggie Kelly, Angela Toner, Eileen McLeer, Lena Bowden, Nancy Boylan, Kathleen Flanagan and two competitors who signed no name. Will the members please read the paragraph entitled "Important?"



## OUR NEXT COMPETITION.

## I.—For Members over 12 and under 18 years of age.

A handsome book prize will be given for the best essay on "Easter and Its Legends."

## II.—For Members under 12 years of age.

A handsome book prize will be given for the best letter on "Easter."

All competitors will please remember the following rules:—All competition papers must be certified by some responsible person as being the **unaided** and **original work** of the competitors. They must have attached to them the coupon which will be found in this issue (one coupon will be sufficient for all the members), and must be written on one side only of the paper. They must be sent so as to reach the office not later than by the **first post** on March 14th. All letters to be addressed:—**Francis, c/o The Cross, St. Paul's Retreat, Mount Argus, Dublin.**

## MY LOVE OF THE CURLS OF GOLD.

(An Imitation of Plunkett.)

My Love of the curls of Gold  
I kiss Thy parched lips,  
And with closed hands essay to hold  
The blood that slowly drips  
Down from Thy lance-pierced side,  
Till every drop doth seem  
Through all the living world to glide,  
An ever-swollen stream.

My Love of the crown of thorns  
I pluck one thorn away,  
When fresher than all summer morns  
A little oozing spray

Of blood drops on my breast  
And dyes it with its stain.  
How could I but strive to arrest,  
O Love, such awful pain!

My Love of the cross of wood  
I gaze up at the dread  
Self-sacrifice of Thy life's blood,  
Gaze on the God-Man dead.  
And think how little still  
All loves that once I wove,  
Since it was I who Thee didst kill  
Before I learned to love.

M. J. O'Kennedy.

## PRIZE ESSAY.

## "The Shamrock and the Cross."

Amongst Irish Catholics there is a special religious connection between their national emblem, the shamrock, and the Cross on which Our Saviour suffered so cruel a death for the redemption of mankind. The Cross is the symbol of Christianity, and the shamrock, to us, is the symbol of the introduction into our country by Saint Patrick of the Christian Faith.

Then, as the Cross brings home to our minds more forcibly the agonies endured by Our Divine Lord for our salvation, so the little trefoil which is peculiar to Ireland reminds us of the trials that our Apostle, St. Patrick, underwent in converting our pagan ancestors, the Druids. That is why the shamrock is more than the emblem of Ireland; it is an emblem to the Irish people all over the world of the one true Faith that has been preserved and treasured by their race through centuries of persecution and wrong. The fervour with which our ancestors clung to Catholicity, in spite of the proselytising influences that were employed to undermine their Faith, seems to us like a miracle of devotion, but the traditional homage to St. Patrick, through the medium of the little shamrock, down the Ages unchanged and unshaken, shows us clearly the magnificent spirit of those to whom the Poet pays a beautiful tribute in "The Faith of Our Fathers." The strange union in the fourth century by our Patron Saint of the Cross of Mount Calvary with the shamrock of Ireland, which has been so productive of good for the whole world should, at all times, be a reminder to us to endeavour to be better and worthier of Jesus Christ and His Irish Martyrs. The shamrock should always help us to remember the bitter Passion and Death of Our Saviour, and should make us feel how unworthily we are of His great sacrifice for us. Whenever we are tempted to sin there should arise within us that burning sense of ingratitude and wrong which is expressed in the lines:—

"Oh! shame beyond the bitterest thought  
That evil spirit ever framed,  
That sinners know what Jesus wrought,  
Yet feel their haughty hearts untamed,  
That souls in refuge, holding by the Cross,  
Should wince and fret at this world's little loss."

Mary Ward.